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SUBJECT: ITALY SPEEDS PLANS FOR INTERNATIONAL GENDARME

TRAINING CENTER

REF: STATE 143267

Summary

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[11.](#) The Italian government is moving quickly with plans for an international gendarmerie/constabulary training center and is looking for immediate US input on details such as project objectives, standards, and the numerical scope of the future training program. MFA and Carabinieri officials have confirmed that the existing Carabinieri training facility at Vicenza is ready to house the training center with minimal structural modification. Italy also has on hand an ample number of experienced trainers, according to our contacts. With USG input and approval, the Italians hope to have their program plan ready to circulate among G-8 members in September, with the aim of beginning training courses in 2005.

The upcoming visit by a team led by PM (Reftel) will be a good opportunity for presenting concrete US ideas -- and possibilities for financial support -- in regard to getting the training center up and running. End Summary.

MFA Pushing to Show Project Proposal in September

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[12.](#) The Italians are wasting no time in moving ahead on the proposed international gendarmerie/constabulary Center for Excellence at Vicenza. In a July 8 meeting with MFA G-8 Office Director Giampaolo Cantini, Pol-Mil Officer learned that the Italian government has already tasked the Carabinieri with drafting a project plan on an urgent basis. Noting that Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's office has taken pointed interest in this project, Cantini stated that the Italians wish to complete the project proposal -- with US input and approval -- by early September. They then hope to circulate the proposal among G-8 members for input and as an initial solicitation for financial support. Italy's goal is to begin training in late 2005. Cantini stressed that Italy would like more USG input on the aim and scope of the project, particularly in regard to target numbers of trainees and the modalities of US financial assistance. Italy would require financial assistance from US and other donors, Cantini said, for sustaining the basic operating costs of the training center.

Carabinieri Have Facility and Personnel

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[13.](#) The Carabinieri official charged with preparing the project proposal, Colonel Domenico Libertini, told Embassy officers on July 9 that the existing Carabinieri training facility at Vicenza is capable of housing the Center for Excellence with only minor physical modifications. The current facility is already used for pre-deployment training for Italian (and some foreign) units going into the SFOR Multinational Specialized Units (MSU) in Bosnia. The Carabinieri have an ample number of experienced trainers on hand, though few of them speak English at the necessary level. According to Libertini, the Vicenza facility could handle up to 250 trainees at a time, allowing for perhaps four six-week courses per year. The "train the trainer" proposal being developed will envision two programs to be delivered simultaneously: one for command-level officers and one for lower level officers and non-coms.

Needed: Objectives, Standards, and Target Numbers

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[14.](#) Both Cantini and Libertini said that, while Italy can readily supply facilities, personnel, and a deep background in gendarmerie/constabulary expertise, the project itself still lacks definitive shape. The Italians are looking to the USG for concrete ideas concerning training objectives and training standards. Most importantly, in light of the expressed USG willingness to provide funding assistance, the Italians would like USG guidelines about target numbers of trainees. A target of 600 trainees over five years, for example, would

present a completely different set of challenges than would a target number approaching the maximum training capacity of the proposed Center for Excellence, which would be approximately 5,000 trainees over five years.

Comment

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15. The MFA and Carabinieri have taken on this project with enthusiasm. They are prepared to work with the US in planning and implementation and are looking for immediate concrete USG input on objectives, target numbers, and the coordination process among G-8 partners. The Italians are drawing on their own highly developed expertise for defining and implementing the training program itself but are seeking political guidance to ensure that they are on track with US/G-8 objectives. The upcoming visit by State and Pentagon representatives offers an excellent opportunity for bilateral coordination on this initiative.

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